1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

342 pp. 164–166). Such dwellings are thatched with palm fronds or comparable materials (fig. 57). Most *Caingang* groups live in houses identical to those of the *Caingué*. When on a journey the *Caingang* sleep

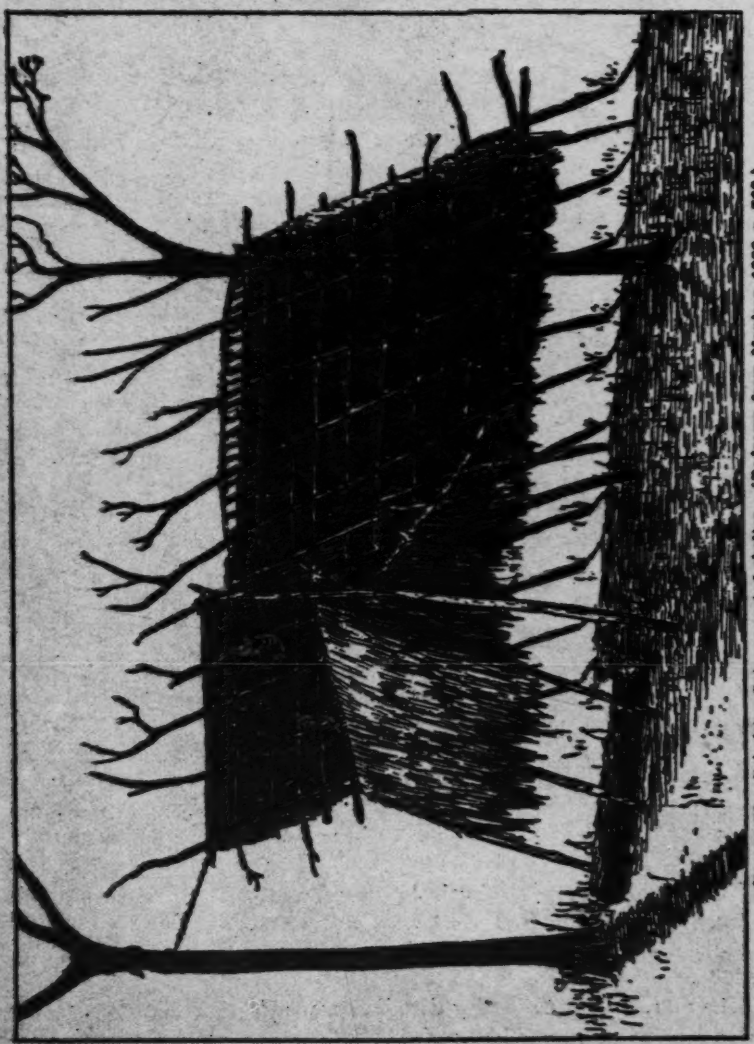

FIGURE 58.—Primitive Caingang wind shelter. (Redrawn from Manizer, 1930, p. 762.)

in flimsy shelters or rest in a sort of nest which they build in the top of a tree (Horta Barbosa, 1913, p. 35).

513 Hammocks of cotton are a recent *Caingang* acquisition. The ancient *Guayaná* slept, according to Portuguese chroniclers, on branches

1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

513 or skins. Their descendants, the *Caingang*, rest on large strips of bark or thick layers of palm fronds, but many groups have adopted platform beds.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTS

291 **Clothing.**—The wild *Caingang* go naked except for a belt—generally a skein of brilliant brown threads of the bark of the young *Philodendron* root or of palm twisted into a cord—and a square cloak (kurú) reserved for cold weather (fig. 58, *a*, *b*). This garment is passed under the right arm and fastened on the left shoulder so as to leave both arms free. Women wear a short skirt made of caraguatá fibers, secured around the waist by a wide belt of bark dyed a brilliant black. Both sexes wrap strips or strings of peccary hair or of bark around their ankles. Some *Caingang* tie up the foreskin of the penis and tuck it under their belts. On solemn occasions, *Caingang* women who were in contact with the *Guaraní* missions wore a narrow sleeveless shirt (tipoy) made of caraguatá fibers. Koenigswald (1908 b, p. 31) reproduces a feather apron which he describes as a women's garment. *Caingang* women are also said to have used a bark band passed between the legs and fastened to the belt.

301 **Ornaments.**—Some *Aweikoma-Caingang* of the State of Santa Catarina and of Rio Grande do Sul wear long rosin labrets like those of their *Guaraní* neighbors. Others have wooden lip sticks (generally made of pine knot) 2 inches (¾ cm.) long "in the shape of a nail." This usage is responsible for the name *Botocudo* given to the *Caingang* in these States.

301 292 237 Feather ornaments were common among the *Caingang*, but except for the small "visors" of short toucan feathers worn around the forehead, they are rarely described in our sources. Debret (1941, pls, 11 and 12) has endeavored to represent a "Coroado" (*Caingang*) chief displaying all his ornaments. The chief wears a fan-shaped feather headdress attached to his nape. Long feather tassels are tied to his upper arm and under his knees. The *Caingang* of the State of Paraná don, on festive occasions, a feather cape, that covers them from head to foot (Koenigswald, 1908 b, p. 27). If this ornament actually was used by these Indians, it may well represent a survival of the feather cloaks of the ancient *Guaraní*.

301 [237] During dances, men and women often strew down over their heads. Necklaces of seeds, animal teeth, bird bones, claws, and hoofs were generally slung around the shoulders; those composed entirely of monkey teeth were especially valued. The *Caingang* of Guarapuava and of Misiones had necklaces of small shell disks (*Orthalicus phogera*). Some *Caingang* wore necklaces which weighed nearly 6 pounds!

302 Until recently, the *Caingang* wore a circular tonsure on top of the head; the fashion disappeared among adults after their contact with

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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of it, or he carefully chops out the root or log until the path is clear; he never leaves a rough edge.

The forest has certain little peculiarities whose marks the Indians recognize when they see one of their number come back from the hunt with a bloody eye or a mass of little cuts on his legs. There is a kind of bamboo that the Indians call *kotkólo* which hangs like a vine from trees and whose mark on the human body is so specific that the Indians can always tell when one of them has fallen foul of it. *Kotkólo* has a surface like sandpaper and a long thorn that curves slightly upward like a tiny scimitar. If you escape the thorn the surface may rasp across your face and leave a stinging welt. There is also a tall strong grass that grows in the open places the Indians love so well and that cuts like a knife. No one dares just walk through it; the feet must swing out like scythes to beat it down.

The Indians are acutely aware of their mountain forests as something with which they have to struggle and which is full of pain for them. The forest is a mass of vines and thorns that cut and trip; it is alive with insects that suck and torment; and they make no bones about saying so. They divide the forest into "clean places," those in which there are no vines, thorns, or bamboo,—they also call them "pretty places"—and "dirty places," where the tangle is so thick that it obscures the light of day.

In the winter these mountain forests are cold and nights are gray with the mist that rises from the watercourses. The temperature often drops below freezing at night, and not even the thickest clothing will keep out the cold and damp. Yet for generations the only clothing the Indians had was a knee-length netlike robe of plant fiber, worn about the waist by the women, and a closely woven shirt of the same material, reaching to the hips, worn by the men in the winter. When they began to raid the Brazilians they stole vests and blankets and it was common to see an Indian naked except for a little belt around his waist to tie up his penis—and a vest. The vest kept the torso warm while it allowed freedom of motion to the arms. The Kaingáng never do anything more with an animal skin than make soup of it, and before they had blankets and vests they simply spread a few fern fronds on the ground at night and lay down on them to sleep, pulling a net-like robe over themselves if they were so fortunate as to possess one.

On winter nights they are miserable and often get up to warm themselves by the fire. On a morning in May as I warmed my aching joints by the fire and watched my breath spiral upward, Chukembégn said to me: "Last night I slept all over the place. It was so cold nobody slept." Sometimes they fall asleep sitting by the fire, their arms on their drawn-up knees, their heads sunk forward. The scarcity of blankets brings the young men together in the sleeping parties they love, when a half dozen of them,

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wrapped in each other's arms, lie under a couple of blankets. Children sleep almost anywhere that they can crawl under a blanket, and any solitary sleeper welcomes warm flesh that will help to shelter him against the cold. If children were not welcome sleeping companions it would go hard with them in families where scarcity of blankets would leave them absolutely unprotected.

The Kaingáng are hungry in winter and early spring. Then the tracks of animals are hard to interpret and the tapir can run far and fast, for it is no longer burdened with its young and the forest is cool. To the Kaingáng the tapir is not only the most important food, it is the very symbol of food. When they have no tapir meat there is very little meat of any kind, for the tapir is most plentiful when the wild fruits and nuts are ripe, and when these are gone the monkeys and birds, the rodents and pigs, the deer and the tapir that have fed on them for months, grow scarce or vanish altogether. Many primitive people who are faced with this seasonal scarcity have developed some technique of preservation, but not so the Kaingáng. They preserve only pine nuts and have nothing to support them in these times of hunger.

Summer, with its warmth, its dryness, and its plenty, brings comfort at last to these people who sew no skins and make no warm clothes against the winter, who have no knowledge of boats or rafts to carry them across the rivers that lie everywhere around them, and who, in a hungry land, preserve no food and make no traps. If necessity were the mother of invention the Kaingáng would have all these things, which would make their life easier. If people systematically adapted themselves to their environment the Kaingáng would not only be dogged and skillful hunters, but they would have the traps and the fishing techniques which they completely lack. The men would not only be untiring, uncomplaining providers, but they would have discovered how to preserve the food they obtain with so much effort, so that in the lean days of winter they would not grow weak and retch and vomit with hunger.

The Kaingáng are powerful and of tough physique.[1] The arms and legs of the full-grown men are thick and muscular, and the women, although shorter and less conspicuously muscular, are strong enough to carry heavy loads. Their hair is straight and black, their dark-brown eyes wide and level, their noses high-bridged and coarse, their lips thick. Their skin color ranges from a deep brown to a golden tan. Sometimes a sick person who has lain a long time by the fire, away from the sun, may be practically white. The men, who are about as tall as the average white European, are graceful in spite of their massiveness. It is a pleasure to see them walk—the tangled forest has never let them learn to run—with their high springing

[1] They have very bad teeth.

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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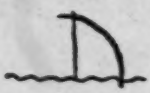
342 house if the sky is clear when they make camp. In the night, when the rain finally does come, they either lie asleep where they are, start up and hurriedly throw together a house from whatever material happens to be lying about, or wander sleepily into the ethnologists tent, where they crowd together sleeping almost on top of one another. If the ethnologist descends from his hammock on such a night he steps on someone's face or kicks an infant in the ribs.

These houses that the Kaingáng are so loath to build are made by tying arched boughs to a high transverse that is supported by two uprights sunk in the ground. Horizontal boughs are laid and tied across the arched ones, and the whole is covered with leaves to within about two feet of the ground. The result is a long shelter open completely on three sides and partly open on the fourth, with a curved roof that forms the rear wall. A man and his wife can put one up in half an hour. When there are many people the house may be doubled so that instead of the arch being like this:



it looks like this:

If people arrive unexpectedly the house can be extended indefinitely by the addition of transverse beams.

[354] 513 On the edge of the long side of the house long logs are laid for the fires; and the Indians sleep in a row with their feet to the fire. Since these houses are not partitioned into family rooms the opportunity for anyone to gratify his curiosity is limited only by the height of the flames and by his good manners. At night when the men have come in and the flames are leaping, the pots bubbling, and the meat roasting, the houses fill with blinding smoke. After supper the fires die down, and it is pitch-dark beyond the faint red glow of the coals. A few hours later it is impossible to see what is going on, and even the Indians cannot tell which dark bulk is Vomblé and which his wife, Kulá. Although everyone is careful to provide a place for himself when camp is made, there is no certainty that he will actually sleep there, for the Kaingáng are nomadic even in their sleep. Although Véye may eat with his wife he may get up to wander over to Chukembégn's fire for a few nuts and to Waipó's for a bit of fruit, and if sleep overtakes him at Waipó's he will sleep there. Perhaps later in the night when the chill and stiffness have crept into his bones he will get up and wander sleepily over

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to his wife, kicking Klendó in the ear and overturning Amendó's pot in his semi-somnambulism. All of this makes ethnology terribly difficult, for it is hard to be sure that the dark mass you had decided was Yakwá an hour ago isn't Vomblé or just the shadow of the house post now. 513

Kaingáng camp sites are any shape at all. Level ground is rare and what there is is so irregular that the Indians have to distribute themselves about it in the most economical way possible. But they will never sleep on any kind of slope, and if a particular patch of level ground is just a little too small for a family they may build it up by throwing some dirt on a foundation of leaves. When a woman sits down, lays her firebrand on the ground, piles wood on it, and begins to nurse her baby, it is pretty certain that camp will be made right there. No woman sits down without deliberation, for where she sits she stays, and where she stays she and her husband will sleep. Nothing can dislodge her, and no one will dare to suggest that she move over. It is a matter of complete indifference to her that the spot she has picked out may be such that a large family will have to break up in order to conform to her choice. 361 562

After she has nursed her baby, eaten a few nuts, and perhaps put the pot on to boil she gets up and cleans the ground, pushing the surface litter back for a pillow, chopping out the protruding roots, scraping and leveling until it is "clean." Then off she goes for ferns to cover the site, sometimes walking half a mile to get the exact kind she wants. When this is all done the camp looks inviting, but next day, after fifty bare feet have walked, run, fought, or toddled over it and the soup has been spilled, it is untidy and dirty. By the end of a week, if they should stay so long, dirt has piled up around the camp—nut shells, pieces of animal hides, fruit skins, bones, palm-shoot shells, wasp's nests from which the larvae have been taken and eaten, basket splints, and human and animal offal—and the place has a repellent odor. 364

The Kaingáng are awake an hour before dawn. The young men lie huddled together under their blankets, sometimes five or six of them in a row, chattering and laughing, while the married men shout across from their beds with their wives and someone perhaps lies singing quietly to himself. At last a fire is stirred and a woman or a child goes for water. By dawn the pots are on the fire, and the campers are beginning to shake the stiffness out of their bodies. Perhaps some young woman still lies lazily nursing her child while her young husband sits on her feet to keep them warm. Men begin to take down their bows and bend them against their legs, and arms like wrestlers' swell and bend as the bows are drawn. A famished dog yelps as its owner beats it for stealing food; a woman growls at her child in mild, helpless anger as it defecates in camp. The men circulate around while the women sit quietly nursing their children or eating. 512

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from adults it is hard to see why they should bother with one another.[1] They are at the beck and call of anyone who wants a warm little body to caress. As Monyá, age two, wobbles by on fat uncertain legs Kanyahé calls to him. He slowly overcomes the momentum of his walk, turns about, smiles and wobbles obediently over to Kanyahé. Children lie like cats absorbing the delicious stroking of adults. The little children receive an enormous amount of adult attention and one never sees them caress one another or lie down together. It is impossible to keep track of children around the campfire. By choice and from necessity they literally sleep all over the place. They like to cuddle next to an uncle, aunt or step-mother. In the winter when there may be only one blanket to shelter a family, the little ones are driven to crawling under the cover of someone else who welcomes the additional warmth of the little bundle. This wandering around often culminates in the sexual experience to which the grown-ups are eager to introduce the child, and he is generally enjoyed first by a person much older than he. Some married men have nicknames that bear a humorous reference to their experience in trying to deflower young girls. Yakwá was called, "You pierced your mother" because he had deflowered a young girl who had the same name as his mother. Kovi received a nickname because his first cousin clawed his penis when he tried to deflower her. The growing child's sexual experience is primarily humorous, often illicit, administered by adults, and apt to be violent in the case of girls.

When the children grow up to be young men and women a strange dichotomy of behavior is noticeable, which is all the more striking because the Kaingáng lay no emphasis on such differences. Kaingáng young men love to sleep together. At night they call to one another, "Come and lie down here with me, with *me!*" Then there is a shifting and squirming so that Nggugn or Waipó or Kanyahé can lie down where he is bidden. In camp one sees young men caressing. Married and unmarried young men lie cheek by jowl, arms around one another, legs slung across bodies, for all the world like lovers in our own society. Sometimes they lie caressing that way in little knots of three or four. Women never do these things. I have never seen any signs of complete homosexual relations among the men or women. I have sat night after night talking to knots of young men, and I have seen them caressing one another in an absolutely open fashion in the broad light of day. But I never saw them make an overt sexual gesture. In other cultures and even in our own one may see young men continually

[1] This whole situation contrasts strikingly with what I observed among the Pilagá Indians (MSS in preparation). There the children receive slight attention from the adults. Sexual intercourse begins at about 5 years and most of the sexual play of the children is perfectly open. Everyone talks and jokes about the sexual affairs of the children.

342 shelters holds several couples belonging to the same family. Each couple has its own fire in the center of the hut. These shelters, like the smaller ones, remain open laterally about one meter from the ground.

Inside the shelter, on either side, a broad earth shelf is laid to serve as a pillow.

● [213] The floor of the hut is completely covered with fern leaves. The related couples lie down upon it to sleep side by side, their head on the elevated earth shelf and their feet toward the fire.

352 Weapons, baskets, clothes and utensils are hung from the ceiling of the shelter, and smaller objects are kept in the thatch.

291 The warriors' attire consists of several "loin cords" which they use as belts and which are ornaments rather than true breechcloths.

[283] These cords, called masêna, are braided in two varieties: dark, made of imbó liana bark fibers; and white, made of palm fibers.

The same palm fiber cords are also worn tightly fastened above the ankles.

The women's attire consists of an apron 1.60 meters in width and 1.50 meters in length.

It does not take them long to dress, for they simply fold the apron in two and wrap it around the waist.

[236] These aprons are woven with the fiber of a special kind of wild
[231] nettle, and adorned with linear figures drawn preferably in red or blue.

302 Their hair is cut on the forehead in a semicircle which extends to the parietal region, where it is shaved at an acute angle toward the ear. In the back it is clipped above the shoulders. An even circle five centimeters in diameter is shaved on the crown and kept in good trim.

This hairdo is worn by all adults, male and female.

301 On festive occasions the warriors make headdresses with the
292 feathers of a bird they call cocolina (Aquila?), which they connect
237 by means of a network of thin [123] embira fibers. When decked in these ornaments, their head, face and chest painted with red and black stripes, they acquire a very impressive appearance.

On these formal occasions, the women and a few of the warriors tangle into their hair the delicate multicolored feathers of various small birds.